

Why do we kiss the hands of our Father the Priest?

Fr. Jacob Nadian
St. Bishoy Coptic Orthodox Church

Questions:

When I meet with some of our people, I, out of my love for my children, offer my hand with the cross and leave it for them to kiss because I want to share this great blessing with my beloved children.

Unfortunately, many of our people stand up without even a little bowing down in reverence and respect to priesthood, spiritual fatherhood or age. They barely touch the cross with the tip of their fingers, as if it is something awful or disgusting to kiss my hands or the cross.

Some of the children started asking many questions like:

- Why do I leave my hands for them to kiss, while other fathers do not?
- How about the priest who lives normal life like all of us using his hands in many things like eating, drinking and other bodily functions that may carry microbes, viruses and contagious diseases?
- How could I kiss the hands of the priest or bow my head down before him if I personally do not kiss the hands of my own father and will not allow my son, when he grows up, to kiss my hands or bow his head down before me, but only for God?
- And the list goes on and on and on ...

Answers:

Allow me my beloved son to start answering these questions with some questions of my own. I hope you permit me to call you a son since I am a Father and will answer you later about how any priest could be called a Father, even if, as some claim, God didn't allow fatherhood on earth. Now, my simple questions are:

- Do you object to kissing the hands of anyone in general or only the hands of the priest?
- Did you ever see people kissing the hands of their parents?
- Did you ever see people kissing the hands of their spouse?
- Did you ever see people kissing the hands of their children?
- Did you ever see people kissing the hands of someone as an act of acknowledging and appreciating of a great favor that was done for them, not because they have to, but because they love to?
- Did you ever see people kissing anything like their diploma, a picture of their beloved ones, a book, a letter of employment, an icon, etc.

I am really wondering and amazed! If you see all of these things happening around you and with you every single moment of your life, so what is the point behind your unceasing attack on priests and accusing them of pride for giving their hands to bless you (as I will explain in details below) and getting sick and disgusted at this behavior and using the internet and social media for all kind of hurtful words.

Why? What is your worldly goal or spiritual goal behind all of this? Will this lead you to eternity? This if you even believe in eternity and the teaching of the Holy Bible; as you claim.

Allow me to help you out, if you so desire.

The Lord has given us a free will to follow His teaching, His way, the right way through His church (be patient and read along). He also gave you a free will to follow the worldly teaching and hence He can judge you accordingly for following the way that sadly leads to atheism and destruction. Just tell me if there is peace in this world while running away from God and His church.

Let us get started with the Holy Bible that has all meaning of true living to see if there is any mentioning about kissing or not.

1. New Testament

Let us start with the Lord Jesus Christ who reproached the Pharisee for not kissing him; as He said:

✠ “Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon: Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in” (Luke 7: 44-45)

Notice here that the woman did not kiss the Lord’s hands, but bowed down to kiss His feet and the Lord did not forbid her from so doing.

Remember that the Lord was in the flesh like all humans, eating, drinking and doing all bodily functions, as all humans do, for He was the Son of Man.

There is more interesting things to this story. Instead of pulling His feet away from the sinful woman (or His hands, following our topic today), He let her kiss them and blessed her for her humbleness and rewarded her with peace and forgiveness of sins; as He said:

✠ “Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little. Then He said to her, ‘Your sins are forgiven.’ And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, ‘Who is this who even forgives sins?’ Then He said to the woman, ‘Your faith has saved you. Go in peace’” (Luke 7: 47-50)

Please read the underlined words in the verses above: she loved much and hence her sins were forgiven, her faith saved her and most importantly, the peace of the Lord will accompany her.

- So, do you love your church and your father the priest that much?
- Do you humble yourself as the woman did to receive these great blessings and rewards?

- Do you feel unworthy and bow down before him or do you stand like the Pharisee criticizing even the Lord and His teaching?

In other biblical stories, we read about kissing, as a natural thing that shows mutual love; as described above. For example, in the story of the Prodigal Son, we read:

- ✠ “And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him” (Luke 15: 20)

We also read about the commandments that St. Paul and St. Peter gave to their children:

- ✠ “Greet one another with a holy kiss” (Romans 16:16)
- ✠ “All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss” (1 Corinthians 16:20)
- ✠ “Greet one another with a holy kiss” (2 Corinthians 13:12)
- ✠ “Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss” (1 Thessalonians 5:26)
- ✠ “Greet one another with a kiss of love” (1 Peter 5:14)

In the above verses, the words “Holy Kiss” have great many meanings. It is not about the passionate kiss between a husband and a wife, but; as we do in the Divine Liturgy; it is about reconciliation, love and peace among the people; as the Lord said about the sinful woman above.

This holy kiss include the kissing of the hands of our parents who care for us, our loved ones without whom we will not feel our existence in this world and our holy father the priest who cares about our spiritual welfare to reach the “faith that will deliver us”; as the Lord said to the woman.

To explain how holy this kiss is, compare it to the unholy and deceitful kiss; as Judas betrayed the Lord Jesus Christ:

- ✠ “Now His betrayer had given them a sign, saying, ‘Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him.’ Immediately he went up to Jesus and said, ‘Greetings, Rabbi!’ and kissed Him” (Matthew 26:48-49)
- ✠ “Now His betrayer had given them a signal, saying: Whomever I kiss, He is the One; seize Him and lead Him away safely’. As soon as He had come, immediately he went up to Him and said to Him, ‘Rabbi, Rabbi!’ and kissed Him” (Mark 14:44-45)
- ✠ “But Jesus said to him: Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?” (Luke 22:48)

2. Old Testament

In the Old Testament, we also read about kissing and mutual respect among all people. Let’s read a few passages of the Scripture:

- ✠ “And he (Jacob) came near and kissed him; and he (Isaac) smelled the smell of his clothing, and blessed him and said: Surely, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which the Lord has blessed” (Genesis 27:27)
- ✠ “Then it came to pass, when Laban heard the report about Jacob his sister’s son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him and kissed him, and brought him to his house. So he told Laban all these things” (Genesis 29:13)
- ✠ “But Esau ran to meet him (Jacob), and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept” (Genesis 33:4)

- ✠ “Now the eyes of Israel were dim with age, so that he could not see. Then Joseph brought them near him (Joseph’s sons), and he kissed them and embraced them” (Genesis 48:10)
- ✠ “Then Joseph fell on his father's face, and wept over him, and kissed him” (Genesis 50:1)
- ✠ “So Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, bowed down, and kissed him. And they asked each other about their well-being, and they went into the tent” (Exodus 18:7)
- ✠ “Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head (Saul), and kissed him and said: Is it not because the Lord has anointed you commander over His inheritance” (1 Samuel 10:1)

These are just a few examples. Let me go back to my original question, is your objection to kissing in general or only to priests. You have seen so far lots of examples in the New and Old Testaments, but now let me address that particular issue about kissing the hands of our Father the Priest.

3. How about Kissing the Hands of our Father the Priest?

To answer this question, let me share with you some important facts that you do not know about the priest or the priesthood.

I wish that these facts make you look for a priest, any canonized Coptic priest, to kiss his hands and receive his blessings.

If you don't accept the following explanation and hear from a priest who represents the church in all its doctrine and sacraments, there is nothing else I can tell you, for the Lord Jesus said:

- ✠ “He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me” (Luke 10:16)
- ✠ “And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector” (Matthew 18:17)

Please open your heart and mind to read the following Ten Commandments that I present before you. They represent the doctrine, theology and sacraments of our Holy Coptic Orthodox Church. After reading them, use your free will to make up your mind and “What you do, do quickly” (John 13:27).

1. Before Ascension of the Lord into the heavens, He did something that is very important to our doctrine. It is written:

- ✠ “So Jesus said to them again: Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them: Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained” (John 20:21-23)

Why did the Lord care about mentioning that important order of “breathing” on them? Simply because He established the rites of ordaining a priest. The breath from the Lord God is eternal and hence it will never end to the last priest on earth, otherwise His church will end right after His ascension. This eternal breath is used in ordaining priests where the pope or the bishop breathes on the person to be ordained.

This Godly breath and calling makes the Holy Spirit dwell in the priest and authorizes him to practice all church sacraments and to teach, bind, and absolve, as it is written:

✠ “Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven” (Matthew 18:18)

2. The priest joins you in your life journey all the way from your birth (bathing prayers) to the last day of your life (funeral prayers).

3. By the hands of your father the priest, you are born a second birth to the Lord Jesus Christ in Baptism, following His commandments:

✠ “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen” (Matthew 28:19-20)

Without the hands of a canonized priest that gave you this spiritual birth, you cannot enter the kingdom of heavens. This is what the Lord said:

✠ “Jesus answered: Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God” (John 3:5)

4. By the hands of your father the priest, your body is completely consecrated as a holy temple to the Lord. Remember that after baptism, your father the priest with his hands anoints your body with 36 anointments using the holy Chrism (Myron):

✠ “But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things... But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him” (1 John 2:20, 27)

5. By the hands of your father the priest and the uttering of the Holy Spirit through his mouth, you receive the blessing and forgiveness of sins in the sacrament of repentance and confession; as the Lord commanded in Matthew 18:18 and John 20:21-23, mentioned above.

6. By the hands of your father the priest, the bread and wine are blessed in the Divine Liturgy and by his mouth, he calls upon the Holy Spirit to descend and convert the blessed bread and wine into the Body and the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

7. By the hands of your father the priest, you receive the Holy Body and Honored Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ through communion, exactly like any father who feeds his child, something that none of us can ever forget or ignore.

Here are two questions for you:

First Question:

Do you believe that you partake of the Holy Body and Honored Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, or do you only believe the false teaching claimed by many that God just said:

✠ “Do this in remembrance of Me” (Luke 22:19)

Isn't it sad that people when they wish to do something according to their making, they attribute it to God using part of a verse and ignoring or hiding the rest of the verse. The whole verse reads as follows:

✠ “And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying: This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me. Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying: This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you” (Luke 22:19-20)

So, why do they only focus on the last part of verse 19 “Do this in remembrance of Me”? Simply because they don't have priesthood and never received it from the Holy Spirit through the apostles. Therefore, they consider priesthood just a position, like any professional job in the world, made it only for themselves according to their desires as St. Paul said:

✠ “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers” (2 Timothy 4:3)

I just wonder about how they interpret the above verse in Luke 22 and the following clear verse that was said by the Lord:

✠ “And as they were eating (Passover first), Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said: Take, eat; this is My body. Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying: Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matthew 26:26-28)

St. Paul also said:

✠ “For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said: Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me. In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying: This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me” (1 Corinthians 11: 23-25)

Isn't it what the priest always do in the Divine Liturgy, doing it in remembrance of what the Lord did, meaning as we “pray the Divine Liturgy”, we remember what the Lord did and how He established the Sacrament of Eucharist. As you know, the priest takes bread and wine and prays and blesses them by his hands and through the calling of the Holy Spirit, they change into the Body and the Blood of the Lord in the priest's hands?

If it wasn't so, and if what we offer on the altar is just bread and wine in remembrance of what the Lord did, how about this fearful warning from St. Paul:

✠ “For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes. Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, **not discerning the Lord’s body**” (1 Corinthians 11: 26-29)

The intriguing question now is: why did the Lord command us to pray the Divine Liturgy and offer His Holy Body and His honored Blood to the believers. He answers the question by Himself saying:

✠ “Then Jesus said to them: Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him” (John 6:53-56)

The Lord Jesus Christ loves you, He died on the cross for you, and He wants you to abide in Him and live with Him forever.

Let’s also add to that important fact of the priest holding the Body and Blood of the Lord by his hands, another blessed proof. Let’s look at what happened to people who touch the garment wore on the body of the Lord:

✠ “And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment. For she said to herself: If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well. But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said: Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well. And the woman was made well from that hour” (Matthew 9:20-22)

✠ “And begged Him that they might only touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched it were made perfectly well” (Matthew 14:36)

✠ “Wherever He entered into villages, cities, or in the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged Him that they might just touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched Him were made well” (Mark 6:56)

✠ “Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped” (Luke 8:43-44)

So, touching the garment on the body of the Lord caused all these healings and blessings, how about the hands of the priest that hold His Body and His Blood?

Do you also know that touching such hands and bodies (relics) of the men of God; can continue to give blessing and life, even after death? Here is a biblical proof:

✠ “Then Elisha died, and they buried him. And the raiding bands from Moab invaded the land in the spring of the year. So it was, as they were burying a man, that suddenly they spied a band of raiders; and they put the man in the tomb of Elisha; and when the man was let down and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and stood on his feet” (2 Kings 13:20-21)

Second Question:

- Why do you partake of the Body from the hands of the priest and drink from the blood from the same spoon that is given to all people?
- Why don't you worry about their eating and drinking habits or their use of hands in bodily functions?
- Why don't you worry at that time about viruses and microbes that could reach you during communion?

The answer is that you truly partake of the Body and Blood of God who gives life, healings and protection from any sickness or disease.

So, why do we get sick? It is because of our wrong habits of eating and drinking and the type of junk food that we eat almost every day.

Again, God gave you free will and He will not impose Himself on you to tell you what to eat or drink. Kindly, He offered you a priest who can pray the sacrament of Unction of the Sick to help you out.

8. By the hands of your father the priest, a simple oil can be used in the sacrament of Unction of the Sick. The priest's prayers gives that simple oil power and healings of body and soul (forgiveness of sins), just as St. James said:

- ✠ “Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the priests of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven” (James 5:14-15)

9. By the hands of the priest, you receive a great blessing of the sacrament of matrimony where you and your spouse become one. Can anyone, other than the priest, make you and your spouse as one?

Unfortunately, some people get married outside the church and they just “sign contract” of marriage that can be dissolved for any simple reason as many say, “they could not reconcile their differences”.

Why? Because it is just a contract that could be breached at any time. However, marriage in our church, by a canonized priest who lays his hands on you and places crowns on you and your spouse as king and queen of your house, is eternal. The priest can then help you to reconcile your differences.

10. By the laying on of hands of the bishop and his calling, the Holy Spirit dwells in the person to be ordained a priest, as the Bible teaches us:

- ✠ “Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit” (Acts 8:17)
- ✠ “Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership” (1 Timothy 4:14)
- ✠ “Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands” (2 Timothy 1:6)

From these Ten Commandments, I hope you can see the hands how the hands of your father priest follow you in your life journey from birth to the end. It is not necessarily to have the same priest all your life, because the Holy Spirit that works in priesthood is the same for all priests.

Also, do not forget that even priests kiss the hands of each other because of our strong faith that we also will receive the blessing from our fellow priests.

Please remember that the priest holds himself responsible for your eternity, works hard to lead you into eternity and supports you with his unceasing prayers and guidance.

Question:

What if the priest also sins in his life or toward others, do I still kiss his hands?

Answer:

Please differentiate between the person and the order that he received. The priest is a human being who could sin every day and every night, however his priesthood order is always pure because it is given by the Lord Himself who called that person into priesthood.

Priesthood is not a job, it is a calling, as St. Paul said:

✠ “And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was” (Hebrews 5:4)

The high priest of that poor priest is God Himself:

✠ “Called by God as High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek” (Hebrews 5:10)

Therefore, when you kiss the hands of your father the priest, you receive God’s blessing and you learn how to humble yourself before God and His servant, steward and ambassador, as St. Paul said:

✠ “Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God” (1 Corinthians 4:1)

✠ “Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God” (2 Corinthians 5:20)

Question:

Why should we call the priest “Father” although God commanded us saying “Do not call anyone on earth your father”?

Answer:

After all what we said, some still puts doubts in the hearts of our people that we should not call the priest as a Father and hence we should not kiss his hands because God commanded us saying:

✠ “Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven” (Matthew 23:9)

Well, to understand what the Lord said, let's read the full passage of the Scripture:

† “Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, saying: The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do. For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers, but all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, ‘Rabbi, Rabbi.’ But you, do not be called ‘Rabbi’; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted” (Matthew 23:1-12)

If you read this Scripture carefully, you will understand that there is one part directed to all people: “Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do”. There is also a special part directed only to the disciples. This is not a made up story. It is what the Bible said: “Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples”.

Now, when He spoke to the disciples, He said, “But you, do not be called ‘Rabbi’; for One is your Teacher, the Christ”. This means He commanded them not to ask people to call them teachers (Rabbi) or masters, as the scribes and the Pharisees do to get “the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the marketplaces”. To ensure they get this teaching in the right way, He told them “he who is greatest among you shall be your servant”.

As you see, the Lord is teaching His disciples to humble themselves “whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted” and one way to do is not to ask for love and respect, which are already granted to them by God.

However, does this contradict the teaching of the Holy Bible where it says:

† “And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues” (1 Corinthians 12:28)

Here we see that “God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, etc.”. This now explains that God is asking His disciples not to ask for being called “teachers” because many gifts are already granted to them:

† “Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them, if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith, or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching, he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness” (Romans 12:6-8)

† “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers” (Ephesians 4:11)

So, God has given some to be called teachers and hence there is nothing wrong of calling them “teachers” since God gave them that title.

How about His saying, “Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven”? Here the Lord speaks to our fathers the disciples only, who are at the ranks of popes and patriarchs.

As you know, patriarchs are fathers of fathers. The Greek word *πατριάρχης* means father of nation or people since the word *πατρία* means people, nation, family or tribe and *ἀρχή* means chief or head, as in high priest. Since there is no fatherhood on earth that is above the fatherhood of the patriarch because he is called the father of all fathers, God told them “Do not call anyone on earth your father”. This means you are the fathers of the church and all following fatherhoods will come from you.

It is the New Testament and no one in this New Testament will be your father except Me. However, you will be called fathers of all new fathers to come. Let’s see how St. Paul applied this principle when he called his disciple Timothy:

✠ “To Timothy, a true son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord” (1 Timothy 1:2)

✠ “This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare” (1 Timothy 1:18)

St. Paul said the same to Titus:

✠ “To Titus, a true son in our common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior” (Titus 1:4)

If St. Paul misunderstood the teaching of the Lord, that he knows perfectly well, he wouldn’t dare to call anyone as “son”. As a matter of fact, he says something beautiful about fatherhood:

✠ “For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel” (1 Corinthians 4:15)

Why do you say that dear St. Paul? Simply because:

✠ “My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you” (Galatians 4:15)

He is saying that for me as a father, I have labored to give you birth in the Lord all the way from baptism until the day you return to His image and likeness and to be with Him forever.

Many of the apostles used similar words expressing their fatherhood, and the Lord did not object or remove them from His Holy Bible. For example, St. John used the word “children” a lot in his epistles:

✠ “My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous... I write to you, little children, Because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake... I write to you, little children, because you have known the Father... Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour... And now, little children, abide in Him,

that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming” (1 John 2:1, 12, 18, 28)

- ✠ “Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous... My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth” (1 John 3:7, 18)
- ✠ “Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen” (1 John 5:21)

- Now, what do you think after reading these passages of Scripture?
- Do you still misunderstand what the Lord said about not to call anyone a Father?
- Do you still object to calling your spiritual father the priest as “Father”?
- Can you call your biological father with a different title than “Father”?
- Would you object to the Lord who called Himself a “Father”?

In so many occasions, the Lord called Himself a Father. Here are just a few examples:

- ✠ “For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6)
- ✠ “In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name (Matthew 6:9)
- ✠ “So He said to them, "When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven” (Luke 11:2)

From these passages of Scripture, we understand the real meaning of Fatherhood of the Lord Jesus. We should also understand that priestly fatherhood extends from the Lord’s fatherhood.

Finally, the choice is yours. However, the Lord taught us so much about meekness and humbleness for He said:

- ✠ “Learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls” (Matthew 11:29)

Our Father the pope and all priests humble themselves and wash the feet of their congregations at the feasts of the Apostles and Holy Thursday, fulfilling the commandments:

- ✠ “And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all” (Mark 10:44)
- ✠ “Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another” (Romans 12:10)
- ✠ “Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise” (Ephesians 6:2)

Now, how about you? Decision is all yours.